



The USSR

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The Next Round on CSCE

The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) opened in 1973 and concluded in 1975. When Moscow first proposed convening CSCE in the mid-1950's, the Soviet aim was to obtain Western acquiescence in the post-war division of Europe. At the same time, the Soviets wanted to exclude the US and Canada from participating. To Western observers, the Soviets intended to isolate West European countries from their North American allies while reducing the West Europeans' impetus toward greater political and economic cooperation among themselves.

By the time the conference was actually held, however, these political objectives had been postponed, if not abandoned. Both sides were absorbed with relaxing tensions based on their recognition of the status quo. The treaties signed between West Germany and Poland, East Germany and the Soviet Union, and the Four-Power Agreement on Berlin, amounted in practice to the post-war settlement the USSR had sought. Moscow revised its invitation to include all interested NATO states. Europe was set to move from a period of bilateral pacification and normalization to an era of negotiations involving a much broader array of issues and states and employing a multilateral framework.

Participants in the conference agreed to a set of public commitments and a review mechanism designed to encourage East-West contacts in the name of pan-European security and cooperation.

In its cumbersome and complex way, the CSCE may facilitate modest improvements in East-West relations in Europe; it also may set them back if conflicts of interest get out of hand.

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The CSCE involved 35 states, more than one-third of which are nonaligned. The four main issues were:

- Principles guiding mutual relations (Basket I).
- Economic and technical exchanges (Basket II).
- Humanitarian issues (Basket III).
- Follow-up procedures (Basket IV).

The participants agreed to conduct parallel negotiations on force reductions in a different, more limited forum. Thus, the only military questions raised at the conference were the so-called confidence-building measures--procedures for the prior notification of military maneuvers and the exchange of observers.

The bargains struck at CSCE reflect an attempt to accommodate differences between East and West over what the conference was to accomplish.

- *The Soviets* sought to use CSCE to achieve multilateral confirmation of the territorial and political status quo, while agreeing that cooperation and ideological confrontation between different political systems could co-exist. They hoped that this acceptance would help stimulate and sustain East-West cooperation in economics, science, and technology. Soviet objectives were met within the conference's Final Act largely by the principle of the "inviolability" of frontiers and by the inclusion of economic and technical exchanges on the CSCE agenda.
- *The principal Western grouping*, the nine West European members of the EC, saw CSCE as a chance to harmonize their foreign policies and to assure that the conference results would facilitate contact and communication with the East. In addition, many of the Western participants shared West Germany's hope that by creating a firmer basis for the expansion of personal contacts, the multilateral agreement would encourage conditions that would eventually change the

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status quo. These Western concerns were safeguarded in the Final Act by a provision for a change in frontiers if secured by peaceful means, by language sanctioning the free flow of information, and by reduced constraints on travel and a general easing of barriers to human contacts. Meanwhile, the Soviets also agreed to launch the Vienna force reduction talks, a step the Western countries had demanded because they are concerned that the Soviet military preponderance in Europe might somehow be used to achieve political gains.

Attitudes Toward the Second Round

The Belgrade meeting this fall will review implementation of the original commitments, consider ways to expand cooperation, and seek agreement on another review conference.

No government seems to be looking forward to the Belgrade meeting--it has been only two years since CSCE, too short a time to assess its achievement. Relations between the two sides have cooled.

- The East is preoccupied with an upsurge of internal dissidence for which the CSCE commitments provided some justification.
- The Western countries are upset by Eastern repression, by the steady expansion of Soviet military power, and by Soviet adventurism in Africa.
- Western apprehensions over the leverage which the presence of indigenous Communist parties may give the USSR have increased because of domestic changes occurring in some West European countries.

In any case, the basis for mutual confidence seems too narrow, and the occasions for reproach too numerous, to produce a harmonious meeting.

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West European Objectives

In general, the West Europeans support the US in seeking:

- A serious review of the East's record on implementing the Final Act of CSCE.
- The presentation of some new proposals to retain the initiative and encourage the further development of detente.
- Another follow-up meeting.

The allies, however, remain preoccupied with establishing a long-term process. Hence, they stress the need to avoid a clash with the Soviet Union over human rights at Belgrade. They fought to have the so-called humanitarian provisions included in the CSCE Final Act when the US was reluctant to support them. But now they are concerned that the US will provoke a confrontation with the USSR over human rights that will damage detente.

The West Europeans support a policy that combines the promotion of human contacts with the preservation of friendly relations between governments. Their keynote is quiet diplomacy. They do not intend to ignore the way those governments treat their citizens, but they want to avoid appealing to Eastern peoples over the heads of their governments. West Europeans are highly sensitive to the priority which the East places on domestic and bloc control. The allies believe that protests to the East are most effective when they can be related to concrete obligations assumed by the Eastern regimes, such as those arising out of CSCE.

West Germany has the greatest stake in preserving open channels to the East. Accordingly, Bonn is more sympathetic than the other allies to Eastern demands for a cautious approach. West Germany's goals are to preserve and safeguard the prospect of an eventual unification of the German people and to expand the process of East-West interaction.

- It is prepared to endorse improvements in the so-called military confidence-building measures and in humanitarian practices.

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- Bonn also wants the East to join the North-South dialogue, hoping to draw Moscow into closer cooperation with the West and away from reliance on military force for political influence.
- Finally, the West Germans want the West to accept Brezhnev's proposal for an all-European conference on energy. They will probably want to hold such a meeting under the auspices of the UN's Economic Commission for Europe and at a level somewhat below that of foreign minister. So far, they appear to have attracted little support from their EC partners.

France is not enthusiastic about new proposals concerning confidence-building measures and prefers settling humanitarian issues through bilateral contacts. It wants the West to adopt a state-by-state approach to Eastern dissidence. At the same time, the cooling relations between the US and the USSR have tempted French President Giscard d'Estaing to try to reactivate France's "special relationship" with the USSR and to pursue the role of an international intermediary. Paris also resists the US desire for a common allied position on themes and new proposals for use at Belgrade in the fall, wanting to preserve its freedom of maneuver and measure its opportunities to enhance its role as spokesman for Western Europe.

The other allies wish to preserve a common EC position, partly to achieve better West European coordination on matters of defense and security, an objective which CSCE itself had encouraged. They also feel that a common European position would enhance their ability to convince the US not to confront the USSR at Belgrade. The West Europeans said early on that they wished to wait until just before the opening of the fall meeting to decide how to approach the review session in order to be able to base their position on the climate of East-West relations.

Meanwhile, the allies continue to consult regularly but informally at NATO on CSCE issues, and CSCE experts and delegation heads will meet separately in September to exchange information and coordinate tactics before the Belgrade meeting opens.

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The UK, lacking concrete interests like West Germany's and without an Ostpolitik of its own, has based its approach on its attitude toward detente in general. Its view is very close to that of the US, although it prefers a less aggressive US approach on human rights.

Italy has publicly endorsed the US human rights campaign, partly to avoid encouraging leftist forces at home. Prime Minister Andreotti, however, has been privately critical of the President's stand, claiming it disregards the importance of detente and the need for a gradualist approach.

Despite these differences and their various special objectives, the allies generally are sympathetic to Soviet demands for a non-acrimonious meeting, ensuring that any new proposals are within the terms of the Final Act, and discussing broader topics designed to promote detente in general.

Neutral/Nonaligned Objectives

At the CSCE, the 13 neutral and nonaligned states served mainly as mediators between East and West. They took up this role again at the preparatory conference early this summer, and their compromise proposal cleared the way for East-West agreement on how to conduct the fall review session. Their positions at the preparatory conference were somewhat closer to those of the allies than at Helsinki in 1975, a change that reflects the current cooling in relations between the US and the USSR.

The neutral and nonaligned countries have a special interest in the military confidence-building measures. This concern is partly traceable to their exposed position--Austria and Finland, for example, share a border with one or more Eastern countries. As part of a campaign to include the other Mediterranean states, the Maltese got the preparatory conference to agree to establish a group to consider Mediterranean problems at the coming Belgrade conference. Other participants--notably the Italians--favor an increased role for these states, but oppose granting them full participant status. Malta is also likely to renew its call for the withdrawal of the US and the USSR from the Mediterranean in order to make it a "zone of peace."

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Soviet Objectives

Moscow's main objective will be limited and defensive, and its tactics will be aimed at resisting a full review of compliance with the Final Act and efforts to expand human rights guarantees.

In diplomatic contacts and approaches so far, the Soviets have argued that the delegates should arrive at Belgrade prepared to reaffirm and expand upon the cooperative aspects of detente and that the meeting should not be turned into a "tribunal" that would pass judgment on how individual signatories have carried out the provisions of the Final Act. Soviet emissaries making the rounds of Western capitals have raised the threat of an East-West confrontation at Belgrade, and even a return to the cold war, if the West continues to insist upon criticizing the USSR. They have also warned some countries against letting the US "dictate" the shape of the conference and obscure the "real" issues with others of a "secondary" nature.

At the meeting itself, the Soviets will be unable to prevent a review of human rights implementation--it is on the agenda--but they will seek to keep all discussions at as general a level as possible. If necessary, they may even raise the possibility of a breakdown of the meeting, as they did at the preparatory session.

A Soviet diplomat at the preparatory session told a US delegate that the Soviets are prepared to match the US charge for charge and polemic for polemic if necessary. If they go on the offensive, the Soviets will probably emphasize such issues as US visa and immigration restrictions, race relations, and the high level of unemployment, while stressing their own guarantees of basic social and economic rights--for example, full employment, health care, and free education. Moscow will also argue that the basic principles of Helsinki are enshrined in its new draft constitution and that it is the only CSCE signatory to have incorporated those principles into its basic law.

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Soviet Proposals

At least initially, the Soviets are unlikely to introduce new proposals at the fall meeting, since to do so would open the way for Western counterproposals on humanitarian issues. Moreover, they have firmly insisted that new proposals are completely out of order at Belgrade. There are, however, several possible proposals they might hold in reserve to be used if the course of the meeting goes against their interests.

In the area of security, [redacted] the Soviets, or their East European allies, may try to raise the issue of mutual force reductions.

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- Foreign Minister Gromyko has also hinted that the USSR may want to discuss the Cyprus question at Belgrade.
- Although the Soviets have recently suggested that they will not renew their proposals on the non-first-use of nuclear weapons in Europe and for prohibition of admission of new members to NATO and the Warsaw Pact, these could be quickly revived and used to deflect Western emphasis on human rights.
- The Soviets may also advance a number of proposals aimed at eliminating alleged economic discrimination against them in Europe and the US.
- To shift the focus away from humanitarian issues, Moscow may also propose some improvements in procedures for the notification of military maneuvers.
- The Soviets may propose a ban on "inflammatory" propaganda directed specifically at Radio Liberty and Radio Free Europe.
- The Soviets will probably renew their proposals for all-European conferences on energy, transportation, and the environment.

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- The Soviets could bring up the idea raised last year of establishing formal relations between the Council for Economic and Mutual Assistance and the European Community.

East European Objectives

To a large degree, the East Europeans share Soviet objectives for the Belgrade CSCE review meeting. Bloc solidarity on the basic issues and tactics to achieve their goals will probably continue. Romania and Yugoslavia, however, have certain interests and objectives which are at variance with the general Communist position, as was clearly indicated at the preparatory sessions.

Highly sensitive and vulnerable to humanitarian issues, all of the East European states are concerned about the negative impact these issues could have on East-West relations and detente in general. As a result, they--like the Soviets--favor a short conference and one that will not lead to an expansion of human rights obligations. If the atmosphere gets nasty, they can be expected to counter with charges on the following themes:

- Western unwillingness to reduce military tension in Europe.
- Prospective US production and deployment of cruise missiles and the neutron bomb.
- Western "discriminatory" practices.
- Alleged hostile and "illegal" propaganda attacks of US-sponsored Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty.
- Inadequacies of the West's own record on human rights.

East European dissidents, despite the restraints imposed on their activities, are likely to try to dramatize their cause before and during the Belgrade meetings. For their part, the Communist regimes will be even more alert than usual to such activities and can

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be expected to make an exceptionally strong effort to keep the lid on. Some of the East European governments may take other carefully limited actions in the human rights area just prior to the review conference to buttress their claims that they are complying with humanitarian objectives.

Romania and Yugoslavia do not fit the mold. Bucharest played a prominent and constructive role as a mediator during the preparatory meetings. It hopes to broaden and perpetuate the CSCE machinery. Its overriding objective, in addition to cultivating a profile independent of the Soviets, is to secure whatever forms of protection from Soviet hegemony are possible. Romania is as vulnerable as any of the other East European regimes to charges of human rights abuses and will want to avoid a confrontation.

As host, the Yugoslav regime will be particularly concerned that the meeting not deteriorate into a harangue or collapse. Like the other Communist participants, however, Yugoslavia is sensitive to the potential fallout from the discussions on human rights, and it will support efforts to mute and control these.



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Soviet Statements on the Consequences of Nuclear War



An examination of statements on the consequences of nuclear war by Soviet leaders and authoritative commentators over the past 15 years has revealed a trend toward moderation in the tone and frequency of such statements regarding the traditional doctrine that war would mean the destruction of the capitalist system. It is notable that this moderation of Soviet rhetoric coincides with the emergence of Brezhnev as the dominant figure in Soviet foreign policy and the development of initiatives toward the West personally identified with him.

One of the more delicate political issues for Soviet leaders since the early 1950's has been how to publicly acknowledge the devastating consequences of a nuclear war without appearing to cast doubt on the traditional doctrine that socialism is destined to survive and win the historic struggle with capitalism. The classic case involving the dilemma concerned former Premier Malenkov, who in an appeal to end the Cold War in 1954 declared that a nuclear war would mean the "destruction of world civilization." He was forced to recant a month later and was replaced within a year, but to be sure that nobody missed the point the Supreme Soviet session that ratified the leadership changes was told by Foreign Minister Molotov on 8 February 1955 that "it is not 'world civilization' that will perish . . . but the decaying social system of which bloodthirsty imperialism is the core . . ."

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With this lesson as a background, Western analysts have studied the statements of individual Soviet leaders on the consequences of nuclear war for clues as to their broader orientations on foreign policy and strategy. Similarly, they have interpreted general trends in this area as reflecting broader policy. This report finds that:

- Since the late 1960's, no Soviet political leader has expressed support for the doctrine that a nuclear war would bring with it the final defeat of capitalism.
- Soviet military officials have occasionally reasserted this claim, although they have done so infrequently in recent years.
- In the last three years, Brezhnev has come close to repeating the controversial Malenkov thesis and has claimed that current nuclear arsenals are sufficient to destroy all life on earth.
- During the last year two lower-ranking military figures--veteran commentators on strategic affairs--have voiced support for Brezhnev's "overkill" thesis and have drawn from it the conclusion that any augmentation of existing arsenals is futile.

General Trends

The review of Moscow media over the past 15 years reveals an inverse relationship between the confidence of Soviet statements about the consequences of a nuclear war and the Soviet Union's real strategic capability. Thus, during the 1950's and into the 1960's when the strategic balance favored the United States, Soviet political and military leaders contended that while a nuclear war would result in unprecedented devastation, it would be the capitalist system that would be destroyed. As the USSR redressed the strategic balance, however, such statements became increasingly infrequent. In fact since the late 1960's no Soviet political leader has publicly predicted that a war would mean the destruction of capitalism; on the other hand, military spokesmen--

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including Marshal Grechko on at least one occasion-- have occasionally reiterated this traditional prediction.

It is obviously no accident that this moderation of Soviet rhetoric coincided with the initiation of a period of intensive diplomatic activity between the Soviet Union and the major Western powers, symbolized by SALT and detente. Thus, the declining frequency and diminishing bombast of Soviet statements on the consequences and probable outcome of a nuclear war can be seen as a by-product of Soviet foreign policy since the late 1960's and of the Brezhnev style of leadership.

Brezhnev's Views

Brezhnev's own public views have evolved in accordance with this general trend. As late as one month before he replaced Khrushchev as CPSU first secretary in October 1964, Brezhnev affirmed his belief that a nuclear war would entail the destruction of capitalism. That was the last time he made that global prediction, although in November 1967 he offered a more narrowly focused military prediction that "the Soviet state would achieve victory" in any future clash with an aggressor.

After paying little public attention to the issue for a number of years Brezhnev has recently returned to it from a different viewpoint. In four statements during the past three years he has spoken of the destructiveness of nuclear weapons and the consequences of a conflict in which they are used in a manner which seems to imply that there could be no real victor.

- Following a year of muted debate in the Soviet press over the utility of nuclear power in an era of detente, Brezhnev in a July 1974 speech in Warsaw stressed the destruction that would be caused by the use of existing arsenals and refrained from intimating that only capitalism would be the loser. Rejecting the slogan that the best way to insure peace is to prepare for war, he proposed an alternative: "If you want peace you must adopt a policy of peace and fight for that policy." Such a slogan

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was particularly necessary, he said, in a period when enough weapons have been accumulated "to destroy every living thing on earth several times."

- Brezhnev came closer to predicting that a future war would be a catastrophe for all concerned in his speech to the conference of European communist parties in Berlin in June 1976. Considering the current situation in Europe, Brezhnev said, "those who take up the sword will not only perish themselves; they cannot even imagine who else will perish together with them in the fire--enemies, friends, allies, or just neighbors, close and distant."
- In a speech in Bucharest in November 1976, Brezhnev elaborated on the argumentation that he had first used in Warsaw in 1974 warning that if present stockpiles of weapons in the world were employed "mankind might be wholly destroyed."
- Brezhnev returned to the issue most recently during his visit to France this summer. In a speech in Paris on 21 June, he underlined a discussion of the need for "real steps" toward disarmament by warning that under present conditions a spark in "a sensitive place" could "set on fire all the stocks of means of destruction capable of devastating the earth, of killing whole peoples."

Military Views

The trend toward moderation in public statements on the consequences and outcome of a nuclear war has been less consistent among Soviet military spokesmen, although they have been less vocal on these issues than during the 1960's. Their few comments in recent years have often been clearly linked to specific policy objectives. Thus, reaffirmations of the claim that the Soviet side would emerge victorious from a future war seem to have been aimed at such practical objectives as boosting morale

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or stressing the need for vigilance. By the same token, references to the destructiveness of nuclear war have been used to support the need for peace.

The late Marshal Grechko, befitting his position, found himself called on, at different times, both to stress the destructiveness of a nuclear war as an argument for detente and to affirm his belief that the Soviet side would be the victor in a future war as a means of boosting military morale. For example, during the September 1972 Supreme Soviet ratification proceedings for the U.S.-Soviet SALT agreements signed earlier that year, he spoke of nuclear war as "a deadly threat to the future of mankind." On the other hand, in remarks to an all-army conference of party secretaries the following March, he declared that if the imperialists were to unleash another world war, "we are firmly convinced, that victory in this war would go to us--to the socialist social system."

Different categories of spokesmen within the military have tended to take more or less consistent positions on one side or the other of these issues. A good example of the more politically sensitive military spokesmen is Lieutenant General P. A. Zhilin, head of the Institute of Military History. In an article in RED STAR in September 1976, for example, he came very close to implying that a nuclear war would destroy human civilization. He wrote that it is now possible not only to "inflict incalculable disasters and suffering" on the world, but also to "destroy the conditions for the existence of all mankind." On the other hand, civil defense officials seem to have a stake in playing down the destructiveness of nuclear weapons, since inordinate stress on their horrors might make civil defense seem pointless. Thus Soviet civil defense chief General Altunin, in an August 1974 TEACHERS GAZETTE article, complained that some instructors in the civil defense program were presenting an "exaggerated" assessment of the destructiveness of modern weapons to their classes.

By far the most consistent spokesmen for the more militant, hardline position on these issues has been a group of military ideologists associated with the Lenin Military-Political Academy. Apparently regarding themselves as guardians of the traditional ideology, they have repeatedly criticized those who have suggested that nuclear

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weapons introduce a new degree of destructiveness into warfare which calls into question the possibility of surviving or winning such a war. They have consistently been out of sympathy with the main thrust of Brezhnev's detente policies and on occasion have directly challenged publicists who have been known supporters of Brezhnev's policies.

A good example of this school of thought is Rear Admiral V. V. Shelyag, deputy chief of a section in the Academy. In a February 1974 RED STAR article he took issue with remarks on overkill identical to those Brezhnev was to make in Warsaw five months later. Shelyag complained about those who attempt to "oversimplify" assessments of the consequences of a nuclear war by "dividing the quantity of stockpiled nuclear potential in the world by the number of people living on earth" and emerging with the result that "all mankind really could be destroyed." Shelyag called this an "oversimplified, one-sided" approach to such a complex phenomenon as war which ignores the fact that that portion of the world's nuclear potential in Soviet hands is directed not against mankind but in its defense.

Recent Statements

Two prominent military writers not previously known for their moderate views have restated the "overkill" thesis even more strongly than Brezhnev in articles published within the past year. Both articles made unusually explicit the possible implications of such argumentation for Soviet (and U.S.) force levels. In the lead article of the January 1977 MILITARY-HISTORICAL JOURNAL, Col. Ye. Rybkin quoted Brezhnev's 1974 remark that there were enough nuclear weapons now to kill everyone on earth "several times" and concluded that, with armament levels so high, their further buildup would "change nothing."

The same line of argument was presented subsequently in the 14 June PRAVDA by Maj. Gen. Rair Simonyan of the Frunze Military Academy in Moscow, a frequent commentator on U.S. military strategy. Simonyan said that "when both sides possess weapons capable of destroying many times over all life on earth, neither the addition of new armaments nor the enhancement of their destructive power can bring any substantial military--and even less political--advantage."

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